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BULLETIN

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th, 2000 NEWS PICTORIAL CITY: RAIN, WIND, 13: 10 000 PEOPLE

From little things, big things grow...

While mainstream media concentrate on conflict between police and protesters, S11 has seen many creative and non-confrontational actions, which have escaped the notice of mainstream media. Groups of activists and individuals in costumes and with instruments have come together at the blockade to create a carnival atmosphere outside Crown Casino.

Alternative energy activists dressed

Alternative Energy Activists up as solar-powered people this morning, complete with foam rays emerging from their heads, golden costumes, and of course, sunglasses.

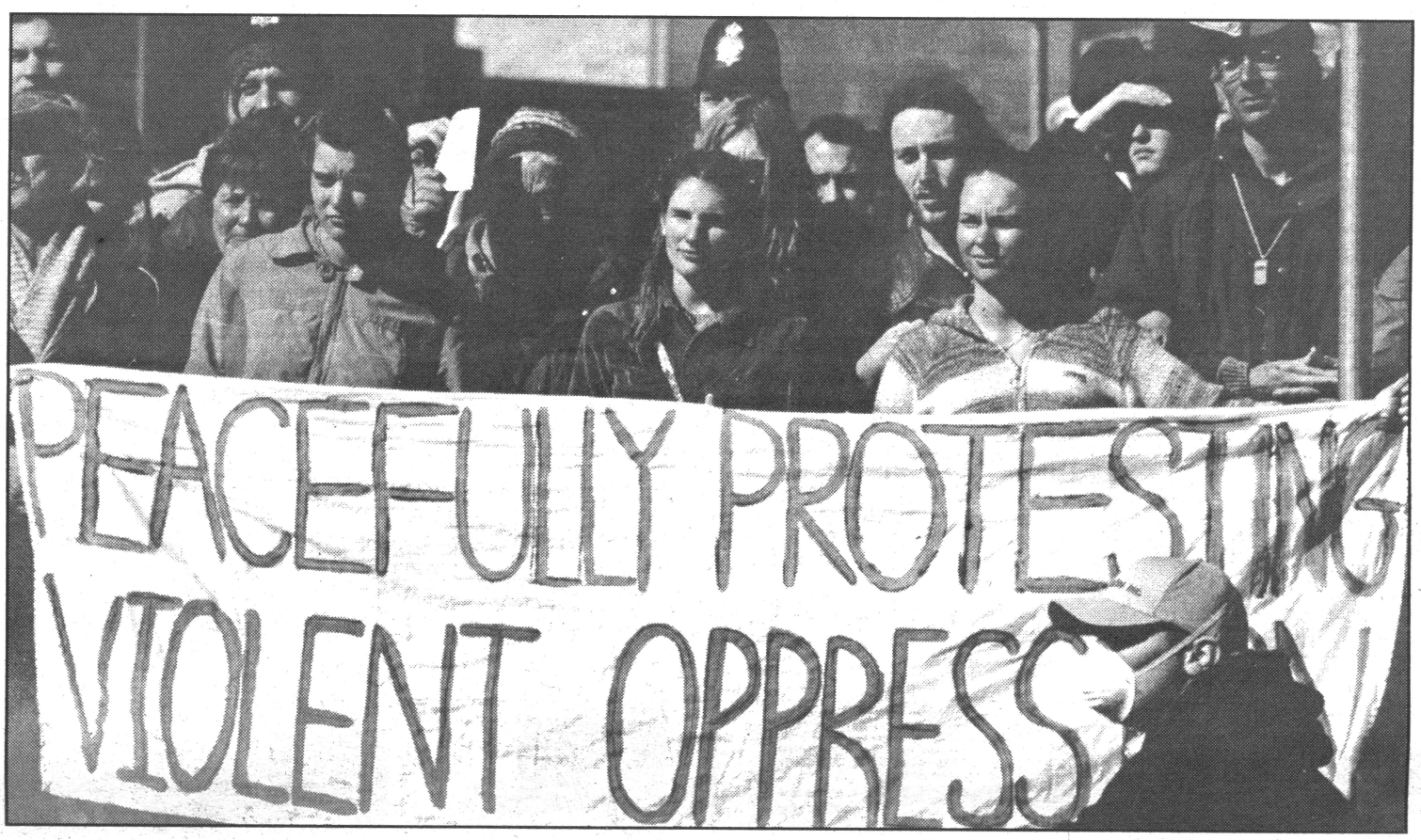
A group of Pollution Police, complete with bobby hats, provided a much friendlier presence than the Victoria Police, demonstrating that confrontation with the environment should not stop us discussing the real issue surrounding globalisation.

Pollution Police

130 protestors occupied the Herald and Weekly Times building, near Crown Casino, in a peaceful protest about media ownership and media freedom. The HWT, which publishes the Herald Sun, is owned by multinational corporation NewsMedia. While police have barricaded buildings such as the Hilton, there was no security at the HWT, so protestors made themselves comfortable in the HWT foyer.

While many protestors are working within collectives and affinity groups, there have been many individual actions, including a giant stiltwalking bear, with camoflage fur...

Continued Page 2...



Despite unfavourable coverage in the mass media, the protest outside Crown yesterday was remarkably peaceful.

S11: Read all about it!

It's 7pm Monday, September 11 and it appears the s11 blockade of the World Economic Forum at Crown Casino in Melbourne has been a success. There have been two arrests at the blockade, which attracted approximately ten thousand people from Melbourne and around Australia.

About one third of the 800 conference delegates have been prevented from entering the building. According to Charles McClean, the head of public relations for the forum, up to 200 delegates have been "stranded" in their hotels, unable to attend the forum.

Protesters are claiming victory in their efforts to "close down the WEF". A number of police have been hurt and at least one protester taken to hospital, after a police charge on protester lines. Protest spokesperson David Glanz stated that approximately one hundred protesters have been injured, due to police tactics.

Actions on the day included a 130-man occupation of the Herald and Weekly Times building, and a rally of hundreds of high school students outside the forum. Vandana Shiva, a Non-Government speaker at the forum, appealed to the media and forum delegates to "stop demonising protesters" Shiva stated that, unless delegates started listening to the concerns of protesters, corporate-led globalisation would mean "the death-knell of democracy."

Inside the forum Australian Treasurer, Peter Costello was visibly shaken as he opened the conference to only a third of intended delegates. Later in the morning delegates arrived by helicopter, or were ferried in by barge. Two bus loads of dignitaries drove around the complex, repeatedly attempting to breach protester lines. The mass blockade has deterred several delegates: Microsoft head Bill Gates has cancelled his address and will not be attending.

Earlier in the day protesters surrounded two cars, one carrying Victorian Liberal (conservative) opposition leader, Dr Dennis Napthine, the other Western Australian Premier, Richard Court. Protesters painted Dr Napthine's car with the words "WEF Kills".

Richard Court has been widely criticised as a supporter of mandatory sentencing, a law that unfairly targets young Aboriginal males, and has directly contributed to Aboriginal deaths in custody. Despite condemnation from Aboriginal and human rights groups, the Court government has refused to repeal the legislation. Up to 500 protesters surrounded the premier's car chanting "This is what democracy looks like". Premier Court sat stony-faced as one West Australian Aboriginal man repeatedly demanded he repeal mandatory sentencing. The crowd held up Court's car for over an hour.

Police baton-charged protesters in an attempt to clear a path for the vehicle. A dozen horses were used to disperse the crowd: at least one protester was injured and sent to hospital. A number of people were treated by medical staff at the site. Court later spoke to the media, describing the protesters as "Unaustralian... It has been a very sad day for this country."

Police continued to baton-charge protesters after the car had left. At other entrances horses were used in unsuccessful attempts to break the blockade. Despite these events, Victorian Premier Steve Bracks praised police forces for keeping the peace.

Later in the day delegates attempted to access the casino by boat via the Yarra River, adjacent to the building, but protesters successfully prevented them from boarding. Eventually a bargeload of delegates was transported down river to the site.

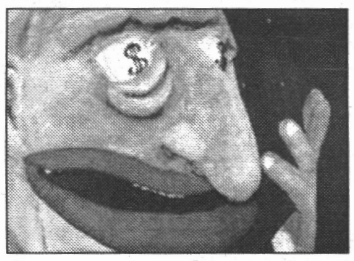
Despite some ugly scenes in the morning, the afternoon was more sedate. Bands and speakers entertained protesters and police alike at the main stage, located at the city end of the casino. An impromptu dance party broke out when a truck with a portable sound system turned up, which protesters described as a fitting end to an amazing day. At the end of day one, police and forum organisers are left to ponder why thousands of people don't agree with their "business as usual" philosophy.

...from page 1

Big Ted?

At 3pm women linked arms around the Crown Casino blockade, forming a giant chain symbolising the shackles of global capitalism.

Activists from the Fairwear campaign, which seeks to improve wages and conditions for textile outworkers, formed a giant washing line across the Melbourne Exhibition Centre. The clothes on the line were soaked in blood, in memory of Indonesian activists who died as a result of campaigning for labour conditions.



Big Puppets are all the rage...

And now in other News...

After weeks of gleefully portraying the S11 protests as violent, mainstream media has been a little disappointed by what has turned out to be a day of "mostly peaceful" action.

Many of those reporting on the protest outside were also represented inside Crown. The Age is owned by Fairfax, which is a member of the World Economic Forum, as is Publishing and Broadcasting Ltd, which owns Channel Nine and (ironically) Crown Casino. Rupert Murdoch, CEO of News Corp, is attending the forum. Besides lots of overseas media, News Corp owns the Herald Sun and the Australian.

For the first hour or so of pre-dawn protests, the mainstream media had little to say, with predicted violence failing to eventuate. Channel Seven's morning news included a positive interview with S11 Alliance spokesperson David Glanz, and 3LO lead their news with "Peaceful protests at Crown Casino".

After the injury of a police officer, automatically assumed to be the fault of protestors, Neil Mitchell kicked in with morning of S11 3AW talkback. Mitchell's justification to a caller claiming that police were attacking peaceful protestors was that a blockade is "an aggressive action in itself". Reports from the site of an ambulance worker who was "roughed up" were paraphrased into the worker being "attacked" by protestors. Talk of the ambulance worker and the injured police man continued all morning, 'till discussion turned to school kids. 3AW reporter Donna Demaio described the protests as "a vicious brawl" and asked "how many are fourteen year olds being used as cannon fodder by the protestors?".

John Faine's talkback show on ABC's 3LO had a focus on violence, but didn't reach Mitchell's levels of sensationalism. Then things quietened down at the casino and discussion, amazingly, turned to the issues. About an hour of really good coverage, including the statement that it was a great thing that students are finally getting politically active again. The 3LO midday news reported only violence.

Midday TV news showed slashed car tyres and graffiti, police horses and pushing and shoving. But it did include some positive statements from David Glanz, despite the journalist's enthusiasm for discussion about violence.

The print media also spent Monday discussing violence. Shots of police and the barricade adorned the cover of the Herald Sun, whose page four special started with the State Government and Victoria Police's recommendation to "keep out of the city". "Unless you have business here that you can't avoid, keep out of the city" said Assistant Commissioner of Traffic Ray Shuey. The Herald Sun also reported that as a result of protests, "confused protestors were forced off [the] popular Southbank walk" on Sunday.

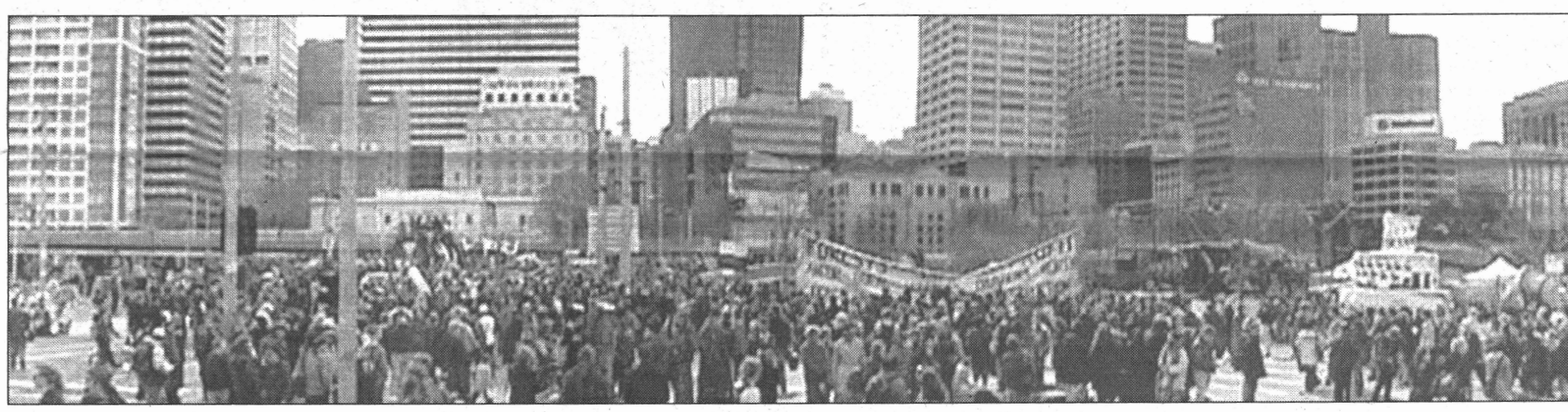
The Age chose to discuss security, and led their special with WEF president Klaus Schwab's perplexed musings about why protestors would try to stop an organisation which is working to solve the very problems they are protesting about.

Meanwhile protestors are a little perplexed by continued comments from Schwabs, Bracks and the mainstream media that people have misunderstood the difference between the WTO and the WEF. "What is the WEF?" has been a standard theme in leaflets and on the website for months.

The Herald Sun's PM edition headlined with "Siege City: Ugly Start to the World Economic Forum", and went on to discuss traffic problems, seemingly unable to find more sensational news.

As the day draws to a close, the number of protestors is believed to have totalled 10,000, while arrests have totalled, err, two.

3CR, Triple R and other independent media sources have given much more positive coverage. We wont bother to elaborate on why.



"vox pops"

Kate: Why have you come to S11 this morning?
Judy: I'm here to protest against this conference, which I think encourages greed in the world. In particular, I'm also a great fan of organic gardening, so I'm here to protest against genetic modification. There's all sorts of people here, It's not the rabble that the press said it was going to be, it's a range of people trying to have a peaceful protest.

Kate: What have you been doing in the leadup to the conference?
Hannah: I went to a conference on Saturday, the public purse one, and I went to Jubilee 2000 on Sunday. I think it's a really good way to get yourself ready for blockading, to talk to other people about the issues.

I'm a member of the Communist Party of Australia, so we joined with the CFMEU and other unions and students who'd come from Sydney, Adelaide and Brisbane at Trades Hall at 7am. We came here - I've mostly stayed here because the marshals have asked us to stick at one gate. It's been fairly quiet here, every so often we hear that things are going on elsewhere and we'd like to go round an check it out, but we've made a commitment to stay here and we will.

Kate: Why have you come to S11?
Rob: I'm here because I think the WEF ought to have invited a wider cross section of people so that it really is a global discussion body. I'm protesting about exclusion. I'm not involved in any group, I'm here as an individual, as a member of the Anglican clergymen. I've seen a lot of happy people wandering around, it's been a nice morning out.

Kate: What actions have you seen this morning?
Rob: One of the main ones was when Richard Court's car was surrounded by hundreds of protestors. An indigenous man from Western Australia put Court under citizen's arrest.

The car was totally surrounded for about an hour and then the police brought in the batons and just started hacking away into the centre of the crowd. A lot of people got hurt. I saw a guy walking away with blood all over his face. Then the police were surrounded by all the people who were there... The police brought in about ten horses and just spun around and around so everyone got booted out of the way. After about twenty minutes of scuffle they managed to get the car out. But the car was surrounded and accompanied up the road.

The media has expressed concerns about violent protesters at the blockade...
The only thing that I've seen that was violent today has been instigated by police.
The fact that a whole bunch of police have gone in with batons and hacked their way through the crowd I think is disgusting. I haven't seen any violence from protestors today except in complete and utter self defence. And even then I haven't seen much of it. People have just dispersed as soon as batons were brought in.

Kate: Why have you come to S11?
Jugar: I'm from a third world country, Sri Lanka, and a lot of our people go through suffering because of the world bank and our economic position. A lot of people are suffering in the third world. Here at least I feel happy that I can do something to shut down this economic forum. Because I believe these people are criminals inside, what they are doing here. They're systematically attacking the working class in third world countries, but also in this country as well. I feel very angry about it.

... but what *is* Globalisation?

What is "Globalisation"?

Globalisation is a term used by economists, the media, and the activist community to describe the process of enhancing the "Global Economy". It is also referred to as **"Free Trade", or "Neoliberalism". Globalisation is embodied by global economic institutions such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).**

Globalisation was billed to the public as a "rising tide that will lift all boats" by Michael Moore, head of the WTO. But as this system grows, it must search the globe for ever-cheaper resources and labour, which usually means the relocation of industry to the "third world".

Founded in 1944, The World Bank and the IMF facilitate the Global Economy by loaning Third World Nations large amounts of foreign currency. Usually these loans have many "strings attached". These "strings" tend to pave the way for large multi-national corporations to move into a country and implement projects which usually hurt the environment (industrial forestry, mining, dams, etc.) and people (sweat-shops, non-unionised labour for agriculture and industry, etc.)

The World Bank and IMF are also responsible for collecting on the debts of Third World nations. Because of the billions in debt that many nations owe, they can usually not even pay back the interest rates on their loans, and must take out more loans. The cycle of debt prevents the third world from ever truly "developing" because it keeps the labor force desperately poor and willing to accept any wage, and the natural resources pitifully cheap.

The World Trade Organisation, which was developed by further liberalising the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) at the Uruguay Round in 1995, is the unelected body, which decides what will happen when one country has a trade dispute with another country. This is called a WTO "Tribunal". The WTO's agenda is to increase global trade, which means decreasing barriers to trade. "Barriers to Trade", as defined by the three members of the Tribunal, can be interpreted as food safety laws (in the case of hormones in beef, or labelling on genetically engineered foods) endangered species protection (in the case against sea turtles and dolphins), or laws which attempt to protect human rights (in the Massachusetts vs. Burma case). When the WTO tribunal rules that one country is in violation of WTO agreements, that country must either overturn it's law (i.e. scratch it off the books, nullify it, rescind it), or consumers, (i.e. you and me) will pay more when buying "luxury goods" from overseas because of WTO imposed tariffs, meant to punish a country for its "trade barriers". In short, the World Trade Organisation has the authority to undermine legislation, passed by sovereign nation-states.

Essentially, the WTO, and the "new" Global Economy, hurt the environment, exploit workers, and disregard civil society's concerns. The only beneficiaries of globalisation are the largest, richest, multinational corporations.

What is the World Economic Forum?

The World Economic Forum (WEF) is the "think tank" and driving force behind the Global Economy. Its members include the CEOs from the top 1000 multinational corporations in the world, academics, trade-ministers from national governments, and influential business leaders. The WEF was founded by Klaus Schwab in 1971, as the "European Management Forum", and was renamed the WEF in 1987 "to reflect its increasingly global outlook (WEF literature)".

The WEF holds its annual meeting in the small resort town of Davos in the Swiss Alps. According to the WEF's literature, this meeting is "now considered the global summit which defines the political, economic and business agenda for the year".
The World Economic Forum is an extremely powerful, unelected and unaccountable body of officials who are making major decisions about what we, the human population, will read in the media, what food we will eat, what we will study in school, where and in what conditions we will work, etc.

Essentially the WEF's summits, or meetings, allow the richest and most powerful corporations in the world to mingle with trade representatives from nations, and with each other, to make business deals.

What is the relationship between the World Economic Forum and globalisation?

In the WEF literature, it clearly states that in 1982 "the Annual Meeting in Davos bring(s) together cabinet members of major countries with heads of international organisations (such as the World Bank, IMF, and GATT)...A special Informal Gathering of Trade Ministers from 17 countries is organized in Lausanne by the Foundation, which spurs the launch of the Uruguay Round".

With this information from we can clearly see that the World Economic Forum has historically played a key role in furthering the process of Globalisation. It can even be concluded the World Trade Organisation was conceived and developed by the members of this "special meeting" in 1982.

The WEF's members are divided into key areas: Media, Pulp and Paper, Mining, Textiles, etc. The WEF's members come to Davos, and to the many regional summits, by invitation only. Some of the members of the WEF include:

Amcor Ltd.
BHP
Visa
Commonwealth Bank of Australia
Exxon
McDonald's
Microsoft
Monsanto
Nike
Phillip-Morris
Rio Tinto
Boeing
3M
Amazon.com
BP - Amoco
Cargill
Novartis
Chase Manhattan Corporation
Citibank
Colonial Bank Australia
Estee Lauder
Forbes
Ford
General Motors
Groupe Danone
Gulfstream Aerospace corporation
Hewlett Packard
Indian petro-chemical corporation
International Paper Company
Kraft Foods
Mitsubishi Group
Mobil
National Australia Bank
Nestle
Phillips Petroleum
Price-waterhouse-coopers
Placer Dome
Royal Dutch- Shell
Siemans
Telstra Corporation
Coca-Cola
De Beers
Toyota
Turner International
United Technologies Corporation
Viacom
Western Mining Corporation

Outworker Exploitation

In one of yesterday's many colourful actions, Fairwear campaigners protested outside the Exhibition Centre and World Economic Forum (WEF) demanding an end to the exploitation of outworkers by companies such as Nike.

Marching down from Spencer Street, thirty protesters strung up t-shirts dyed in red, symbolising the lives of workers lost in the textile industry. '30 cents an hour' proclaimed one t-shirt shaped placard reminding visitors to the 'Back & Exposed' fashion trade fair at the Exhibition Centre of what is really involved in producing the garments on display.

Outside the Centre, Julianto, a former Nike factory worker in Jogjakarta, Indonesia, spoke of the atrocious working conditions he and his colleagues faced. Paid just $2 a day, workers were often forced to work overtime just to earn enough to survive.
Julianto's union demanded a wage increase of $3 a day but this was still only the minimum wage and not enough to support a family.

Nike said it couldn't afford the wage claim despite making a profit of $A965 million last year. Julianto spoke of the intimidation workers faced organising for their rights saying they had been threatened by the military and police before resigning for fear of their own lives. Nike has 71 factories and employs 23,000 workers in Indonesia.

A member of the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia (TCFUA) speaking at the rally brought home the local realities of outworker exploitation. Fairwear estimates that there are over 300,000 home based outworkers in the textile, clothing and footwear industries or 15 homeworkers for every factory worker. Some people may work in modern factories for award pay. But more often they work in a small cramped sweatshop or in a room or garage at home for low wages.

"I work 14 hours a day, every day of the week. Last week I earned $1.70 an hour that was with my husband and two children giving me a lot of help" says Jenny, a homeworker in Australia, quoted on the fairwear website <http://vic.uca.org.au/fairwear>

"The Invisible Hands of the Market"

Earlier this year, Nike appeared in the Federal Court in Melbourne for the first time anywhere in the world. They agreed that they had failed to comply with the Clothing Trades Award - Australian labour laws for clothing workers, and had committed breaches and agreed to pay the penalty of $5000 per breach amounting to $15,000.

Fairwear's, Nike 'Slavery - Just Stop It' Campaign. It's calling on Nike to sign the Australian Homeworkers Code of Practice and for living wages for workers in Indonesia, China, Vietnam and other countries producing Nike

Direct Action: What to Bring

S11 is the biggest direct action Melbourne has seen in a long time. Police, and even protestors, have been overwhelmed by the size of the protest. If you're curious or concerned about the impact of globalisation on the world, come down to the S11 action and find out what's going on. But make sure you understand the basics first:

DIRECT ACTION
"Direct Action" is a term which is used fairly loosely to describe a range of political actions. Generally these are actions taken to directly confront or highlight the issue or authority you are trying to address. It can take many forms, from street theatre, to symbolic actions, sit-ins, trespass actions, blockades etc. Direct Actions are often disruptive and/or confrontational, and can be arrestable, depending on the type of action taken. They are also used as media 'stunts' to gain attention for the particular campaign they are part of. It is usually best to explore other ways of campaigning for change before you do a direct action. As direct action is confrontational, it can alienate people fairly easily, especially if you haven't explored other ways of getting your issue addressed first. Sometimes, however, direct action can be useful as a first recourse, especially if your action is aimed at a particular event or day, and/or not part of an ongoing campaign.

It is important to think carefully about what you are wanting to achieve, and the possible implications, when you are contemplating organising a direct action. You should probably try to talk to someone who is experienced in organising these types of actions early in the organising process.

WHAT TO BRING
This is a pretty comprehensive list - don't let that put you off. It's important to enjoy the action, but also remember to be prepared for anything! Some of this list deals with what you will need if the police decide to use chemical weapons on the crowd - this hasn't been an issue at the protest so far.

- Backpack - to fit your gear!
- Disposable camera.
- Paper, pens.
- Money for food, transportation & telephone.
- Phone numbers: Legal Aid, friends and relatives Mobile phone.
- NO: earrings, piercings, necklaces, ties etc.
- Warm clothes and wet weather gear - try to cover as much skin as possible.
- Comfortable runners, boots.
- Replacement pants/shirt sealed in bag, to replace wet clothing.
- Water to drink and rinse off chemicals - squirt head bottles are best.
- Energy foods to keep you going.
- Sealed goggles or sunglasses.
- First aid kit - remember your asthma pump!

NB: DO NOT WEAR CONTACT LENSES!!!
Trapped chemicals may cause eye damage.
DO NOT BRING/USE ON SKIN:
Vaseline, detergent soap, skin moisturizers, make up, sunblock, UV cream, because the chemicals bind with them - anything acidic will cause a stronger reaction.

A message from Seattle

Just wanted to let you all know how proud and excited activists in the U.S are about S11. The alternative media here has a lot of positive coverage and as expected, the mainstream press has basically ignored it. Here in Seattle we've been watching the Melbourne Indymedia Centre throughout the day with much interest. We also wanted to tell you not to get discouraged by all the lies, hate, and harassment you're receiving from people in positions of power. The more effective we become as a movement, the more resistance we are going to face from those people profiting from the current system.

Also, never let the numbers game they play fool you. It's nothing more than a way to marginalize us and make it seem like we failed. In Seattle they said we failed because (according to the "media") we only had 45,000 instead of 100,000 in D.C it was 10,000 instead of 25,000. The point is numbers are not relevant because 1) it's to there advantage to underestimate and 2) everything they do is done to try and keep people off the streets. All the talk of violence, the prisons they are going to use for those arrested and how many police there are, not to mention all the distortions about your message, are a part of this tactic. Just don't forget you've already won just by showing up and the world is with you in solidarity. Good luck in shutting it down - we know you can.

From FTE in Seattle

Notes from the Underground

I've never liked buses. They are, I believe, the single most uncomfortable, unsafe, dodgy and uninspiring mode of transport human beings have stumbled across. Don't get me wrong. I value their ability to get me from some particular point A to some distant point B (distance is a factor: if I can walk, ride or swim to a destination I will... sometimes). But there is no joy in being stuck in a bus for an extended period of time, particularly when it is unexpected. If you're going on a trip to some foreign parts, cool. The novelty and expectation of the trip generally outweighs the boredom, discomfort and annoyance of you average bus ride.

Spare a thought then for the poor buggers expecting a ten-minute ride from their plush hotel to the swanky surrounds of the casino. Naturally, being amongst the world's wealthiest fat buggers, the coach they take is pretty well furbished, but not well enough. They get where they're going and "what do you know", there's a shitload of protesters screechin' and chanting and causing all sorts of ruckus.

Bad news kids. We can't get in. "This is your bus driver speaking. We'll be experiencing a short delay while we try and find a way into this building. We do apologise for any inconvenience caused and hope you'll enjoy your trip. No one will come around with juice and peanuts, but hold on, coz inside we have a full buffet-style smorgasbord with, I'm told, at least five different varieties of chicken."
I don't think so. Round and round the casino, no way in. A quick lap of Melbourne while police sort out the situation. Back again and in we go... no... well. Ok let's do another lap and see where it takes us... nope no good.

At last check they'd been in there for five hours, circling Melbourne in the rain. God knows, they may well still be there. Driving around. Cruisin', you know just seeing what's going down in the town. Maybe they've mutinied and sautéed the driver. They're probably on the way to Nimbin or Byron or somewhere a little more sedate. Well good luck to them. Who knows maybe we'll see them at the next protest, trying to send the buses on the path to enlightenment.

Who knows? Is it any more unlikely than these folk eventually understanding why 10, 000 people wouldn't let them get off the bus? I hope so.

What?

IndyMedia needs volunteers to help with distribution: if you can help, call Penny on 9344 4810
If you'd like to contribute, upload your stories to: www.melbourne.indymedia.org

Stop! Police!

Despite media attempts before the World Economic Forum to play up the possibility of Seattle-like scenes of violence, S11 protesters honoured their pledge of non-violent direct action yesterday.

And, like Seattle, the violence that occurred was predominantly perpetrated by the boys (and girls) in blue. Although five police officers suffered minor injuries, there were dozens of reports of police instigated brutality towards protesters.

Several protesters were hospitalised after clashes with police. Not surprisingly, the mainstream media has under-reported or distorted such incidents.

Of the estimated 1700 police in attendance, some employed pressure point tactics (used in the infamous 1993 Richmond Secondary College police attacks) to 'control' the protesters. Others mounted horses and surged through the crowds to disperse peaceful blockades at Casino entrances (reminiscent of scenes at Jabiluka). Still more police ran in tightly rehearsed packs, batons raised, to break up people peacefully linking arms. According to the Victoria Police Operational Guidelines Manual, batons should only be employed as a 'last resort' where there is a high risk of injury to police. This was not the situation yesterday by any stretch of the imagination.

Protesters further reported being shoved by police, punched in the head, headlocked and pushed to the ground. One protester attempting to stop WEF delegates entering the Casino reported hearing deliberately provocative comments on the part of police. 'They were yelling and sneering "C'mon, C'mon" in a vicious manner' he said.

Unconfirmed reports have also emerged of an incident involving capsicum spray yesterday afternoon. In addition, IndyMedia crew have been targeted by police attempting to grab their cameras.

The militant tactics used by police yesterday were a gross over-reaction and clearly disproportionate to the actual threat posed by protesters. What's more, those in attendance reported that many officers were not wearing their name badges at the time of aggression. It is illegal for police to remove their badges unless done for "safety reasons", a defence often abused and easily avoided by redesigning badges with a safer fastening mechanism. The S11 Legal Support Office, established to protect protesters' rights, has advised the Victorian Police Ethical Standards Department of the badge incidents, but doubts that any disciplinary action will be taken.

The Legal Office met with police prior to s11, and were assured that they would be able to communicate with a Police Liaison Officer for the duration of the World Economic Forum. To their knowledge no one has yet been appointed to this position, making the hordes of police all the more faceless and menacing.

Of the thousands of protesters at S11 yesterday, only three were detained. Despite one protester being formally arrested and charged, all three were subsequently released. But instead of praising the thousands of peaceful protesters for remaining calm yesterday, the powers that be chose to pat the cops on the back for protecting innocent "decent Australians" from "radicals". Premier Steve Bracks has praised police, "condemn[ing] outright" WEF protesters as "un-Australian".

The only thing un-Australian yesterday amongst the smiling crowds of protesters was the police violence.

Thought for the Day

"I stood on the bridge doing my part in the line, facing the faceless faces of police. I watched delegates come under the bridge by boat, driven to this extreme by a successful peaceful protest. But then I thought, we need people with surf-boards - hundreds of them. Let's fill the yarra with protestors!"